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# Zazen at the Thai Monastery Wat Phra Dhammakaya

## **By the dojos of Bruges, Tournai, Liège, Antwerp and Ostend (Belgium)**

In December, we shall be welcomed for the third time in a row in the Thai monastery "Wat Phra Dhammakaya Benelux" in Lede. We shall organize a sesshin there with the Zen Master Patrick Parnien.

Two years ago, as we were looking for an adequate place free during the school holidays, we asked the Theravada monks who live in Lede if we could organize a sesshin in their temple. In the past, this temple was a monastery of the "Black Sisters «community: it offers therefore enough place to welcome a sesshin.

Their Abbot, big defender of a narrow cooperation between the various Buddhist schools to propagate the Dharma, gave his agreement and in December 2015 we organized our first sesshin in this place.

In the Thai Buddhist tradition, the laymen are used to offering food to the monks of the temple, to obtain a positive karma and to practice generosity. Thus the Thai community living around the temple wanted to cook also for the Zen hosts. Much to our surprise and at the great pleasure of the Thai cooks, we were pampered and invited to a real "rice table". Next to the gen mai we had asked for the morning, we received a small omelette.

Last year, Rafaël, our tenzo, and Jackie Butaye reached an agreement with the monastery: to preserve the Zen spirit, we would cook ourselves. But it implied for our tenzo and his team to share the kitchen with Thai ladies speaking only Thai: thus the samu took place without too much speaking and rather "I shin den shin". But the atmosphere of the kitchen was very lively and the Thai ladies said goodbye to us reluctantly and asked us to come back return soon ... We shall do it with gratitude in December.

Thus we invite you all warmly for the next sesshin in the Theravada temple "Wat Phra Dhammakaya Benelux".